

Tuesday, March 27th, 2007

**War Funding Bill:** So, the Democrats in the House have passed their "Defeat with Pork" resolution. The Senate is unlikely to support a final version of this critical war funding legislation that has the withdrawal provisions or the pork included in the House version. Even if they do, and it comes out of a conference committee and is passed again by both houses, the President will veto it.

So now what? The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan will reportedly be running out of money in mid-April. That means our troops will run out of supplies, replacements, and be placed in a very precarious position. The military commanders will probably do whatever they can to keep things moving forward. They may defer purchase of new ships or planes or whatever to get the money to keep the effort moving forward in the war.

But they will run out eventually. The \$95.5 billion for the war that was in the supplemental appropriations bill is roughly 17% of this year's military budget. So, they are unlikely to be able to work around this.

What we may have is a very consequential game of chicken like the one between President Clinton and Speaker Gingrich in the 90's government shutdown. This time, it would be between President Bush and Speaker Pelosi over whether or not to shut down the United States military. Now, I understand that the President's approval rating is not good. But can the anti war caucus take the heat when reports from the field come in about brave soldiers doing what they can to keep up the fight without the necessary support? I don't think so. But we'll see.

Congress is scheduled to go on "spring recess" this Friday. As much as I want to go home to my district, I don't think we should go on recess. Nancy Pelosi made her political statement last week to show how much she is against the war. Fine. It's time to get to work then. We have a couple of hundred thousand soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines who are in theater and don't know what's going to happen to their support. They won't be going home for Easter or Passover. Neither should we. We should stay here in Washington and reach a compromise that gives us a chance at victory before the money runs out.

**Partisanship:** About once a year, I need to respond to a number of you who have written me concerned with the partisan tone of my emails. If there is one thing on which most elected Republicans and Democrats agree, it is that partisanship is not a bad thing. In fact, the Chairman (Barney Frank D-MA) of the Financial Services Committee on which I sit, opened the committee this year defending partisanship by pointing out that throughout human history, when people have freedom to disagree, they have split into at least two distinct parties. This open disagreement gives the people the opportunity to see different perspectives on an issue and to choose which one they prefer. That doesn't mean that the two parties cannot compromise to agree on some things. But without those original differing opinions there is no place from which to compromise.

If there is no disagreement, there is no choice. Possibly the worst piece of legislation passed by the California State Legislature in recent years was the electricity deregulation bill that led to the energy crisis in 2001. It was passed by a unanimous vote. Everybody got what they wanted. Which means the public got nothing.

Complain as you wish. But in this I'm going to present my point of view. And I will defend the right of my political opponents to present theirs. Then you can decide who wins.

That's as it should be.

**Pressure from the Speaker:** Several people over the weekend asked me how some newly elected Democrats who voted for the Defeat with Pork bill could have done so given their campaign promises to support the troops and the war on terror. The pressure that one gets from leadership in the majority (whichever party is in power) can be intense. Here is an article out of the Capitol Hill newspaper called "The Hill" on how and where such pressure was applied to wayward Democrats. [Click here to check it out.](#)

Until next week, I remain respectfully,

Congressman John Campbell